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**Testimony in Support of H.B. 5141**  
***An Act Concerning Disclosure of Smoke Detectors and Carbon Monoxide Detectors***  
***on the Residential Property Condition Report***  
**Insurance and Real Estate Committee**  
**February 21, 2012**

Kidde Residential & Commercial, which is part of United Technologies Climate Controls and Security division and located in Farmington, Connecticut, appreciates the opportunity to offer the following comments in support of HB 5141. Kidde Residential and Commercial Division is a manufacturer of residential fire safety products including developing and manufacturing carbon monoxide and smoke detection alarms for both residential and commercial applications.

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless and tasteless gas, and the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CO poisoning claims more than 400 lives a year, and sends more than 20,000 to the emergency room.

Carbon monoxide is a by-product of incomplete combustion. Potential sources include common gas-burning appliances such as a furnace, water heater, stove, oven and grill, as well as other fuel-burning devices like fireplaces, engines and generators. If such devices are improperly installed or malfunction, carbon monoxide can build up inside a dwelling, leading to illness or even death. Nearly every home in Connecticut – roughly 85% according to US Census data – uses some form of fossil-fuel based heating.

Because you can't see, smell or taste carbon monoxide, you may not even realize that you are being poisoned. Initial symptoms mimic the flu, and include headache and nausea. The ONLY safe way to detect this deadly gas is with a working carbon monoxide alarm.

Connecticut's legislature recognized the dangers of CO and in 2005 required CO alarms be installed in all newly constructed homes. Today, 36 states have similar laws, over half of which also require CO alarms retroactively in existing homes.

In 2011, during Tropical Storm Irene and the freak October snow storm, eight Connecticut residents died and hundreds were treated for CO poisoning. The storms which cut power to a majority of the state's residents for several days led many of these CO victims – some whole families - to improperly use generators, charcoal grills and other fuel burning appliances to stay warm, cook and power appliances. Unfortunately, carbon monoxide poisoning is a year round problem, but these incidents can be prevented. In early February it was reported that a West Hartford family was saved when the CO alarm installed in their residence activated, warning them of the deadly gas building up in their home from gasoline-powered equipment being used improperly by a contractor.

We at Kidde see these types of life-saving stories every week. CO alarms save lives. We support H.B. 5141 and commend the bill's sponsors as well as Senator Crisco and Representative Megna and the members of this committee for your consistent leadership in advancing public

policy designed to promote the safety of Connecticut's residents. This bill will go a long way to ensuring that smoke and CO alarms, where required are present and properly installed in homes that are available for sale. **Respectfully, we encourage the Insurance and Real Estate Committee to consider an amendment to the bill as drafted to make the confirmation of the existence of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms and/or the installation of such alarms a condition of the sale or transfer of the property.** This can be accomplished by requiring the seller to certify that working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are present or by providing the buyer with the opportunity to inspect such devices and obtain a certification from the home inspector.

Thank you for your consideration and we hope you will call on us at Kidde if we can be a resource to you in any way.